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Public Record

Ms. Cynthia T. Brown
Chief, Section of Administration
Office of Proceedings
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20423

Dear Ms. Brown:

I am writing to urge the Surface Transportation Board to make a finding that there is a profound lack of rail-to-rail competition in the national rail system. The STB should change its policies to enable increased rail-to-rail competition.

Currently, anti-competitive practices within the railroad industry have driven costs up on my monthly electric bill. That's not right and the STB can help fix it. With the rail mergers and acquisitions most communities do not have a choice in rail shippers. The Rail road is able to charge what ever they think they can get away with, which is as much as they want. They are a monopoly and need to be regulated. Dayland Power cooperatives Genoa 3 power plant in La Crosse WI relies on coal shipped from the west only one Rail Road serve them, the Cooperative has no other option. The cost of shipping the coal has grown at a rate many times greater than inflation and fuel costs. The price of Electricity at Genoa 3 effects my power costs because Great River Energy, my power supplier has a contract to buy part of Genoa 3 production.

Rural-based business and agriculture rely on affordable electricity. Increased rail competition will help maintain affordable electric rates in rural America and will improve economic opportunities for rural communities like mine.

Increased rail competition will also increase the revenues of American agriculture by improving the ability of producers and manufacturers to ship their products affordably, thus improving exports, creating jobs and improving the standard of living in rural communities.

The Surface Transportation Board has an opportunity to make a positive difference and help improve our economy. The comments that the STB has received include numerous examples of the lack of adequate competition in the railroad industry. I hope the STB will find that there is inadequate competition in the railroad industry and will then revise their policies to enhance rail-to-rail competition in order to help preserve affordable electricity and good jobs throughout America.

Thank you.

James Haais
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